

## **BUSINESS MEETING**

*Wednesday, July 30, 2025*

U.S. SENATE  
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS  
*Washington, D.C.*

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 10:07 a.m., in Room SD-419, the Committee Hearing Room, Hon. James E. Risch presiding.

Present: Senators Risch [presiding], Ricketts, McCormick, Daines, Hagerty, Barrasso, Curtis, Cornyn, Shaheen, Coons, Murphy, and Kaine.

### **OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. JAMES E. RISCH, U.S. SENATOR FROM IDAHO**

**The Chairman:** The committee will come to order.

This morning, we have before us three nominations on a business meeting -- excuse me, four nominations on a business meeting.

Has anyone anything to say for the good of the order? We did not discuss this. How would you like to proceed?

**Senator Shaheen:** Mr. --

**The Chairman:** Want to do them en bloc? One at a time?

**Senator Shaheen:** I think we would like a roll call on them, Mr. Chairman.

**The Chairman:** All right.

Well, we will take up Mr. Jason Evans to be Under Secretary of State for Management. Is there a motion to send him forward with a do pass recommendation?

**Senator Ricketts:** So moved.

**The Chairman:** Seconded?

**Senator McCormick:** Seconded.

**The Chairman:** Seconded. The motion has been made. Is there discussion?

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**Senator Shaheen:** Mr. Chairman?

**The Chairman:** Senator Shaheen?

**Senator Shaheen:** Mr. Chairman, I was disappointed in some of Mr. Evans's responses and have some concerns about his management experience because I think that will be a very important part of the job.

I do intend to vote for him, however. He is a career professional at the State Department. I think it is very important that we move our career personnel at State.

I am disappointed that -- as I said at the subcommittee hearing earlier this week, I am disappointed that we have not seen more career ambassadors nominated.

So, I hope that we will begin to see more of those career people sent to the committee and put into positions because most of them have been vetted over the years before this committee and so we ought to be able to move them out to posts as soon as possible.

**The Chairman:** Thank you. I agree with you on getting the careers moved.

I think you are going to see some movement here in the immediate future as I have communicated my views on the matter to those who are responsible therefore.

With that, is there further discussion?

[No response.]

**The Chairman:** If not, the clerk will call the roll.

**The Clerk:** Mr. Ricketts?

**Senator Ricketts:** Aye.

**The Clerk:** Mr. McCormick?

**Senator McCormick:** Aye.

**The Clerk:** Mr. Daines?

**Senator Daines:** Aye.

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**The Clerk:** Mr. Hagerty?

**Senator Hagerty:** Aye.

**The Clerk:** Mr. Barrasso?

**Senator Barrasso:** Aye.

**The Clerk:** Mr. Lee?

**The Chairman:** Aye by proxy.

**The Clerk:** Mr. Paul?

**The Chairman:** Aye by proxy.

**The Clerk:** Mr. Cruz?

**The Chairman:** Aye by proxy.

**The Clerk:** Mr. Scott?

**The Chairman:** Aye by proxy.

**The Clerk:** Mr. Curtis?

**Senator Curtis:** Aye.

**The Clerk:** Mr. Cornyn?

**Senator Cornyn:** Aye.

**The Clerk:** Ms. Shaheen?

**Senator Shaheen:** Aye.

**The Clerk:** Mr. Coons?

**Senator Coons:** Aye.

**The Clerk:** Mr. Murphy?

**Senator Murphy:** No.

**The Clerk:** Mr. Kaine?

**Senator Kaine:** No.

**The Clerk:** Mr. Merkley?

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**Senator Shaheen:** No by proxy.

**The Clerk:** Mr. Booker?

**Senator Shaheen:** No by proxy.

**The Clerk:** Mr. Schatz?

**Senator Shaheen:** No by proxy.

**The Clerk:** Mr. Van Hollen?

**Senator Shaheen:** No by proxy.

**The Clerk:** Ms. Duckworth?

**Senator Shaheen:** No by proxy.

**The Clerk:** Ms. Rosen?

**Senator Shaheen:** No by proxy.

**The Clerk:** Mr. Chairman?

**The Chairman:** Aye.

**The Clerk:** Mr. Chairman, the yeas are 14. The noes are eight.

**The Chairman:** The motion is passed. We will now take up the nomination of Mr.

Thomas Rose to be Ambassador to Poland.

Is there discussion?

[No response.]

**The Chairman:** There being none, the clerk will call the roll.

**The Clerk:** Mr. Ricketts?

**Senator Ricketts:** Aye.

**The Clerk:** Mr. McCormick?

**Senator McCormick:** Aye.

**The Clerk:** Mr. Daines?

**Senator Daines:** Aye.

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**The Clerk:** Mr. Hagerty?

**Senator Hagerty:** Hagerty is aye.

**The Clerk:** Sorry. What was that?

**Senator Hagerty:** Hagerty is aye.

**The Clerk:** Thank you.

Mr. Barrasso?

**Senator Barrasso:** Aye.

**The Clerk:** Mr. Lee?

**The Chairman:** Aye by proxy.

**The Clerk:** Mr. Paul?

**The Chairman:** Aye by proxy.

**The Clerk:** Mr. Cruz?

**The Chairman:** Aye by proxy.

**The Clerk:** Mr. Scott?

**The Chairman:** Aye by proxy.

**The Clerk:** Mr. Curtis?

**Senator Curtis:** Aye.

**The Clerk:** Mr. Cornyn?

**Senator Cornyn:** Aye.

**The Clerk:** Ms. Shaheen?

**Senator Shaheen:** No.

**The Clerk:** Mr. Coons?

**Senator Coons:** No.

**The Clerk:** Mr. Murphy?

**Senator Murphy:** No.

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**The Clerk:** Mr. Kaine?

**Senator Kaine:** No.

**The Clerk:** Mr. Merkley?

**Senator Shaheen:** No by proxy.

**The Clerk:** Mr. Booker?

**Senator Shaheen:** No by proxy.

**The Clerk:** Mr. Schatz?

**Senator Shaheen:** No by proxy.

**The Clerk:** Mr. Van Hollen?

**Senator Shaheen:** No by proxy.

**The Clerk:** Ms. Duckworth?

**Senator Shaheen:** No by proxy.

**The Clerk:** Ms. Rosen?

**Senator Shaheen:** No by proxy.

**The Clerk:** Mr. Chairman?

**The Chairman:** Aye.

**The Clerk:** Mr. Chairman, the yeas are 12. Noes are 10.

**The Chairman:** The motion is passed -- nomination to the floor with the do pass recommendation.

We now have before us consideration of the nomination of Mr. Bill White to be Ambassador to the Kingdom of Belgium. Is there a motion?

**Senator Kaine:** Mr. Chair?

**The Chairman:** Let us do a motion first. Is there a motion?

**Senator Ricketts:** There is a -- so moved.

**The Chairman:** So moved.

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**Senator McCormick:** Second.

**The Chairman:** Moved and seconded that we send the nomination forward with a do pass recommendation.

**Senator Kaine:** Mr. Chair, if I could.

I am going to have a staffer distribute some material to you about Mr. White that I find really troubling, and I just want to say that on the Democratic side I have a fairly high batting average of voting for Trump nominees relative to my other colleagues, and when I vote no I usually say nothing either in committee or on the floor. In rare cases I will speak up against a nominee.

I want you to -- everybody to be aware about Mr. White's statements because I think he poses a real risk of embarrassment to the United States in Belgium.

So, the material that I am giving you is very recent social media postings for Mr. White in 2023 and 2024. The first one is -- it is a little bit hard to read some of the blue but it is from July of 2024 and it is a posting where he says, "It is high time to legitimately prosecute Secretary of State of Georgia and Governor Kemp" to Republican officials in Georgia.

I asked him why he posted it, and you will see these are QFRs that I am giving you.

"As I mentioned in the hearing, I was present on the ground. I witnessed irregularities in several Georgia counties. I do not recall why I posted this."

I asked if that post is consistent with his views today and he said they were not. But this is a recent post from last summer.

Go further, he posted in August of 2024, "Lock Georgia's Secretary of State -- this mother eff up." Not exactly mature behavior to suggest that the Secretary of State of Georgia should be locked up.

"Why did you post this?"

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"I do not recall why I posted it."

"Do you still believe the views?"

"No, I do not."

It gets worse. In 2023, if you look at question five, he posted a posting about Lindsey Graham saying Graham is a snake. That is in May of 2023.

I asked him why. "I do not recall the reason behind posting this tweet."

"Do you still believe the views expressed in this document?"

"The Senator is a close friend, mentor," et cetera.

Okay. These show the kinds of judgment and character that is below the ambassadorial standard. But the real concern I have is the next one.

In May of 2024 -- so this is a gentleman who is supporting President Trump, but this is long before his nomination to be Ambassador to Belgium -- he reposted, platformed a video from a guy named Dries Van Langenhove.

Dries Van Langenhove has been convicted in Belgium of Holocaust denial, violence, pro-Nazism, and the video that Mr. White re-platformed on behalf of Dries Van Langenhove is his sort of summary about why he is right, and the Belgian government is wrong.

I asked why he posted it.

"As I mentioned in the hearing, a friend of mine had asked me to repost this tweet. As I respect Senator Graham immensely, I apologize for not thoroughly reviewing the tweet."

That is a complete non sequitur. Those of you who are here I asked him in the hearing why did you post material from a Belgian Holocaust denier antisemitic criminal, and he said, "I was concerned about the Georgia elections."

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That was his testimony here that day. I said, "I am not talking about Georgia. I am talking about Belgium, the country that you were being nominated to represent. Why did you post it?" He said he could not recall.

Now his reason has something to do with Senator Graham. I have no idea what it is about.

The last material that I have given you are two articles about Dries Van Langenhove's criminal activity, his Holocaust denial, his anti-Semitism, his pro-Nazi views, and his conviction.

Belgium is an original NATO ally. Belgium is the headquarters of NATO. Belgium has had one of the worst instances in recent years of the spike of anti-Semitism.

I do not know exactly why but the Belgian Holocaust memorial has been defaced. Belgians went across the border to France and defaced the French Holocaust memorial.

This issue of anti-Semitism in Belgium is a really big deal right now and this guy, Dries Van Langenhove, has been convicted and sentenced to a year in prison for being one of the leaders of this anti-Semitism in Belgium.

I do not know why President Trump would have nominated this guy for this position. I assume he probably did not know it. But the Belgians know it.

They are going to know it if it comes out of this committee with a yes vote. They are going to know it if it comes up for a floor vote.

I do not think this is the person who should be representing Belgium, and I think his denial is, like, well, "a friend asked me to repost it."

If you are following -- months before you are nominated to be the Ambassador to Belgium, if you are following the activities and the videos posted by extremist Belgian Holocaust denier convicts and putting that out to your social media you are down a rabbit hole and you are down a rabbit hole that is a particularly pernicious and dangerous one in a country that really is having a problem with anti-Semitism right now.

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And so, I would really urge my colleagues, a yes vote in this committee for this individual for this post I think would be an embarrassment to the United States.

**Senator Shaheen:** Mr. Chairman?

**The Chairman:** Senator Shaheen?

**Senator Shaheen:** I would just like to follow up on that because I would have been inclined to vote for Mr. White except for these kinds of postings.

But more concerning, given the hearing that we had and the fact that at that hearing a number of people expressed concern about those postings and what they would mean as he became ambassador, he has continued to post this kind of inflammatory statements attacking Democrats, attacking those who may disagree with him, and that is just not appropriate conduct for somebody who is going to be an ambassador representing the United States.

So, based on that I intend to vote against him as well.

**The Chairman:** Thank you.

Is there further debate?

**Senator Coons:** Mr. Chairman, if I might just briefly.

Having traveled a number of times to Belgium, having known our previous ambassadors to Belgium and the current circumstances as Senator Kaine laid out in great detail, I would hope that we would either defer a vote on this candidate or vote against him in today's meeting.

**The Chairman:** Senator Murphy?

**Senator Murphy:** Joining Senator Coons and Senator Kaine and Senator Shaheen in my real worry about putting this nominee into this very volatile political context with his history of speech.

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I would just also note that there were a number of Biden nominees that came before this committee that were, you know, very deeply scrutinized by the now majority for their speech on Twitter as private citizens.

Some were even denied votes on this committee even though they pledged to follow the policy of the administration but had expressed private views that were alarming to Republicans on this committee.

So, I say that because this is going to be a continued issue that will come before this committee. We are going to have lots of nominees who come out of the private sector with voluminous histories of political speech and we are going to have to figure out what kinds of speech pose a real threat to U.S. national security interests if they end up in post and what kinds of speech can be excused.

But, obviously, there were a bunch of Democrats that were held to a very high standard in this committee because of some of their private sector behavior.

Well, this nominee seems to be being sped through for approval despite some out of bounds language in his political speech.

Thanks, Mr. Chairman.

**The Chairman:** Thank you.

We have had a request to hold this over to the next business meeting. Pursuant to the comity of the committee I am going to hold the appointment over to the next business meeting.

We will now take up Mr. Peter Lamelas of Florida to be Ambassador to the Argentine Republic.

Is there a motion?

**Senator Ricketts:** So moved.

**The Chairman:** Seconded?

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**Senator McCormick:** Second.

**The Chairman:** It has been moved and seconded that we send Mr. Lamelas to the floor with a do pass recommendation.

Is there debate?

[No response.]

**The Chairman:** There being no debate, the clerk will call the roll.

**The Clerk:** Mr. Ricketts?

**Senator Ricketts:** Aye.

**The Clerk:** Mr. McCormick?

**Senator McCormick:** Aye.

**The Clerk:** Mr. Daines?

**Senator Daines:** Aye.

**The Clerk:** Mr. Hagerty?

**Senator Hagerty:** Aye.

**The Clerk:** Mr. Barrasso?

**Senator Barrasso:** Aye.

**The Clerk:** Mr. Lee?

**The Chairman:** Aye by proxy.

**The Clerk:** Mr. Paul?

**The Chairman:** Aye by proxy.

**The Clerk:** Mr. Cruz?

**The Chairman:** Aye by proxy.

**The Clerk:** Mr. Scott?

**The Chairman:** Aye by proxy.

**The Clerk:** Mr. Curtis?

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**Senator Curtis:** Aye.

**The Clerk:** Mr. Cornyn?

**Senator Cornyn:** Aye.

**The Clerk:** Ms. Shaheen?

**Senator Shaheen:** Aye.

**The Clerk:** Mr. Coons?

**Senator Coons:** No.

**The Clerk:** Mr. Murphy?

**Senator Murphy:** No.

**The Clerk:** Mr. Kaine?

**Senator Kaine:** Aye.

**The Clerk:** Mr. Merkley?

**Senator Shaheen:** No by proxy.

**The Clerk:** Mr. Booker?

**Senator Shaheen:** No by proxy.

**The Clerk:** Mr. Schatz?

**Senator Shaheen:** No by proxy.

**The Clerk:** Mr. Van Hollen?

**Senator Shaheen:** No by proxy.

**The Clerk:** Ms. Duckworth?

**Senator Shaheen:** No by proxy.

**The Clerk:** Ms. Rosen?

**Senator Shaheen:** No by proxy.

**The Clerk:** Mr. Chairman?

**The Chairman:** Aye.

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**The Clerk:** Mr. Chairman, the yeas are 14. The noes are eight.

**The Chairman:** The motion is passed.

The nominee will be reported to the floor with a do pass recommendation.

That completes the business agenda. There being nothing further to come before the committee meeting, the committee is adjourned.

**[Whereupon, at 10:22 a.m., the meeting was adjourned.]**